GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1480
ANSWERED ON:27.11.2001
VISAS TO AFGHAN NATIONALS
JAGMEET SINGH BRAR;RAMDAS ATHAWALE;SIMRANJIT SINGH MANN;SUDARSANA E.M. NATCHIAPPAN

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to accommodate Afghan refugees in the country;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that many Afghan nationals have applied for visas to come to India after the 11th September, 2001 incident;

(d) if so, the number of persons applied for visas and the number out of them granted visas;

(e) the number of refugees arrived in the country, till date; and

(f) the criteria adopted for grant of visas to them ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO)

(a) & (b): Due to prolonged war and ethnic conflict in Afghanistan from 1980 onwards, a large number of Afghan nationals migrated to India. As there has been no perceptible change in the situation in Afghanistan, which remains disturbed, the Afghan nationals are being permitted to stay in India on humanitarian grounds. However to maintain some pressure on these persons to return to their home visa extension is granted to them on yearly basis.

(c) & (d): After declaration of war by US, several Afghans of Indian origin are reported to have entered Pakistan. They are granted visa after routine checks whenever their applications come through Indian High Commission, Islamabad.As per information available with Government of India about 275 Afghan Sikh/Hindu families are presently in Pakistan with the intention of traveling to India.So far, Government of India has issued visas for 110 cases on receiving their applications through Indian High Commission, Islamabad.

(e): As on 30.6.2001, there were 19254 Afghan nationals registered and living in India.

(f): As and when visa applications are received from the Indian missions abroad, visas are authorized by Government of India, after usual checks. Yearly extensions are being granted for those who are registered and living in India.